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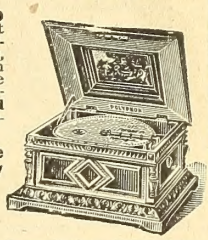

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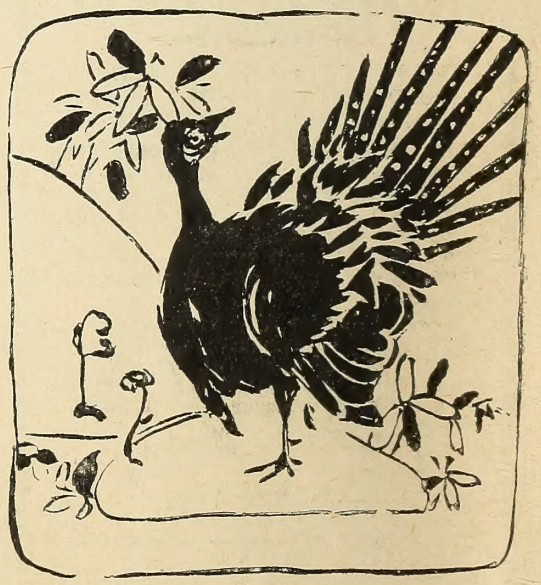

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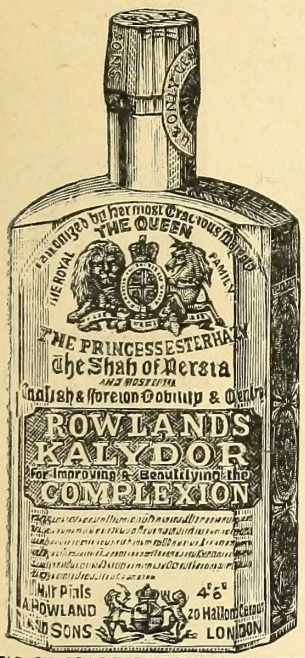

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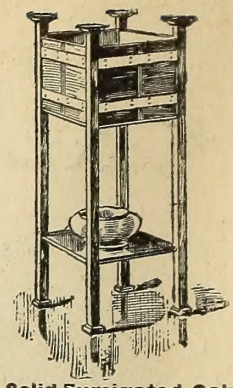

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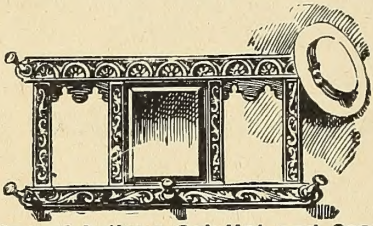

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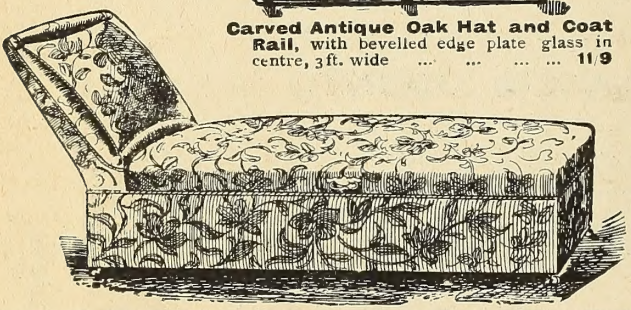

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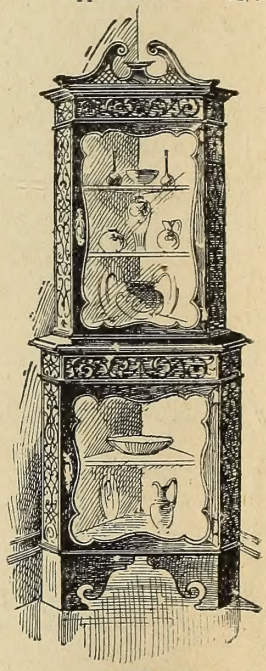

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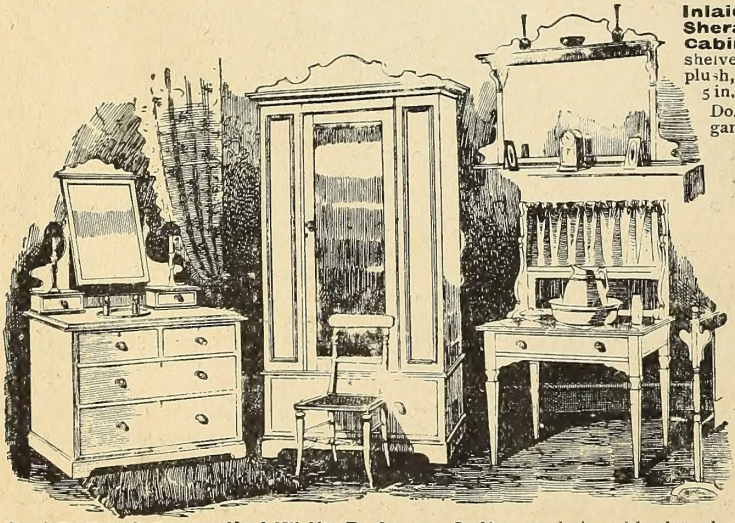

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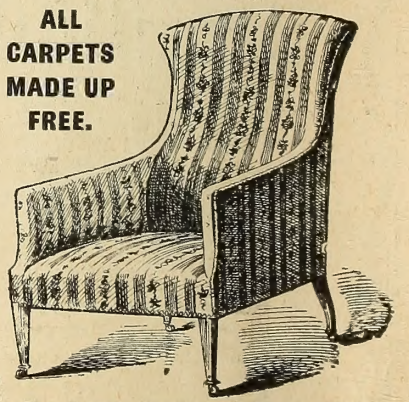

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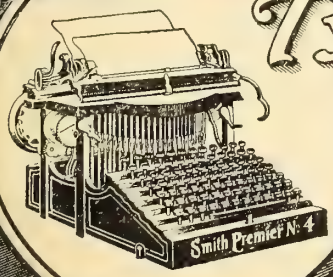

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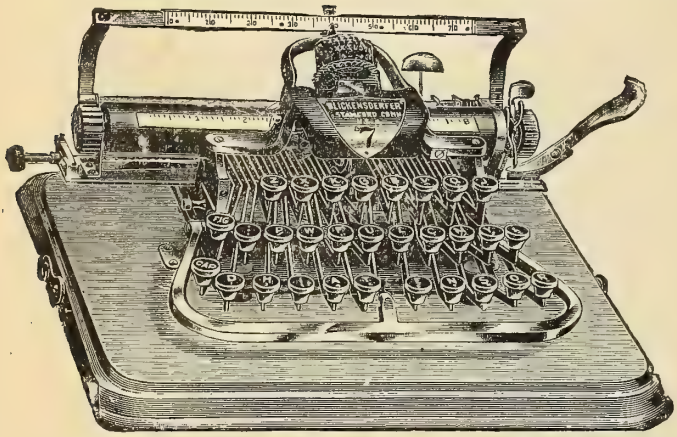

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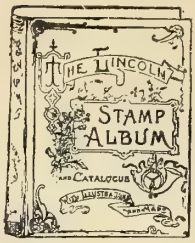

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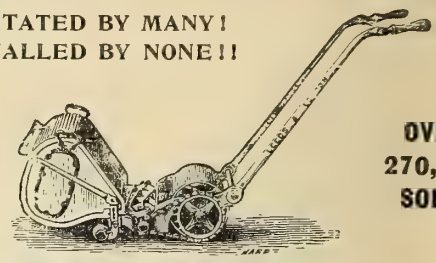

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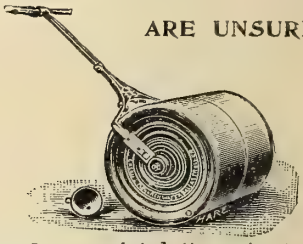

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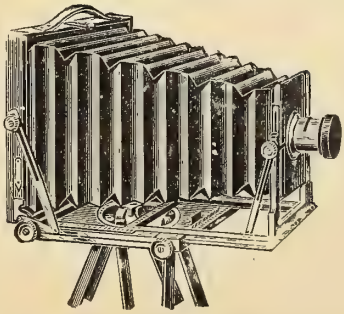

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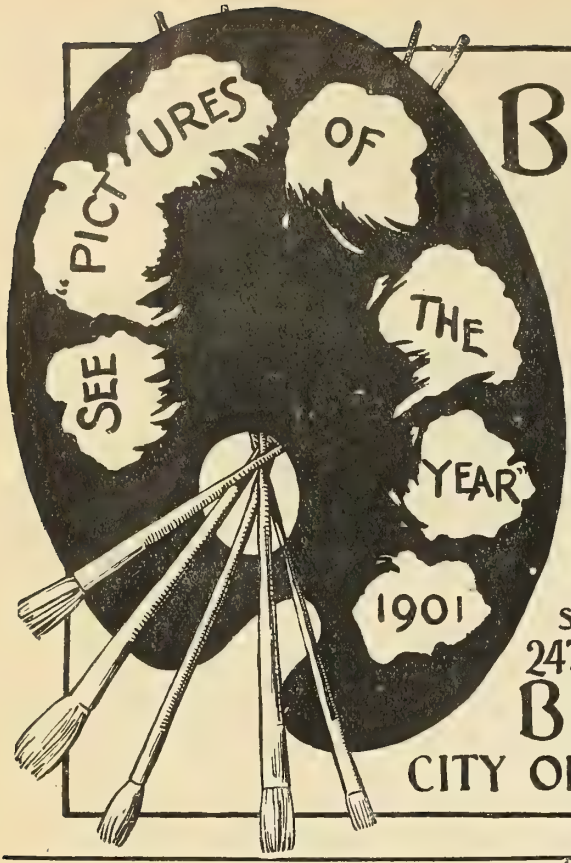

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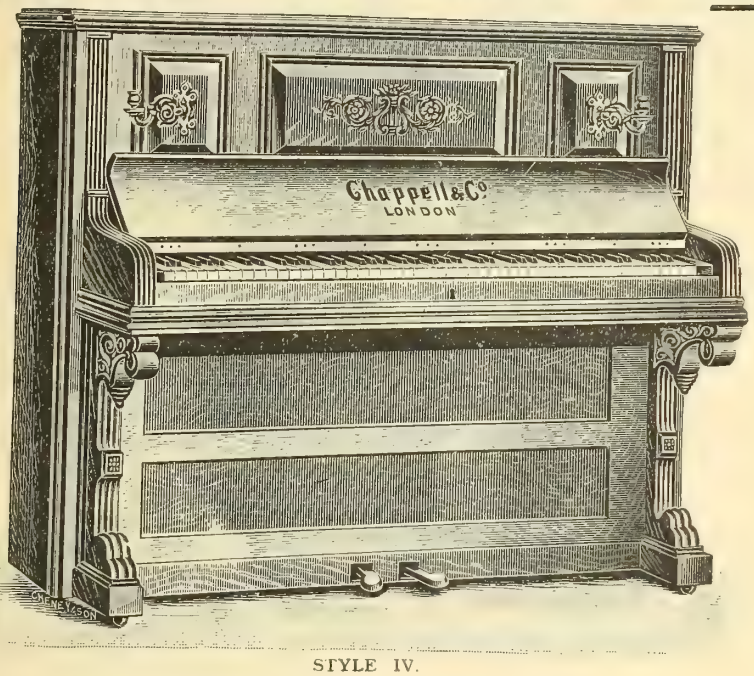

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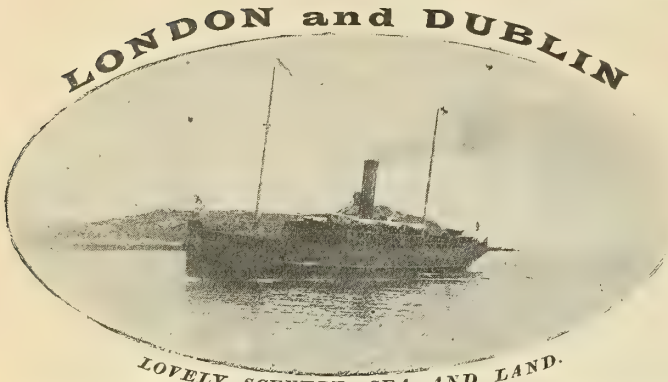

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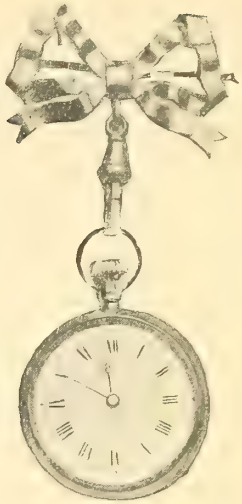

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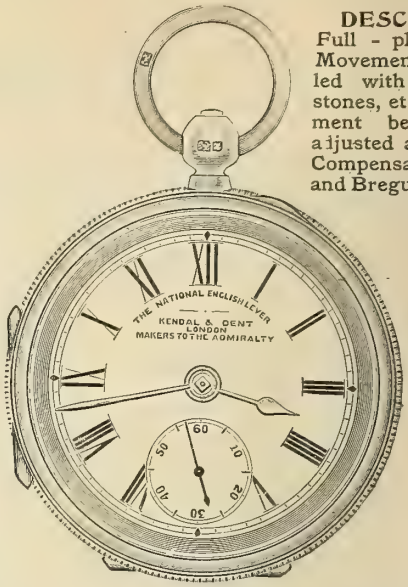

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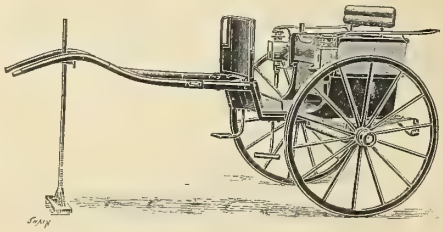

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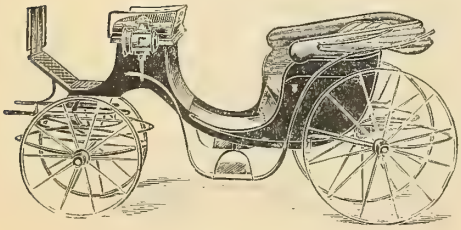

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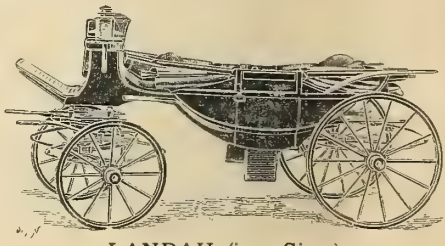

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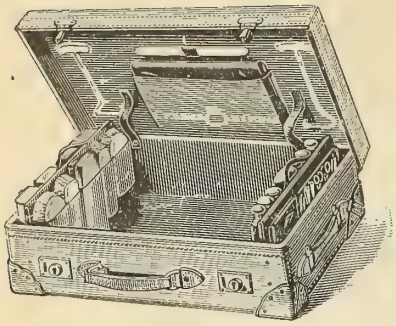

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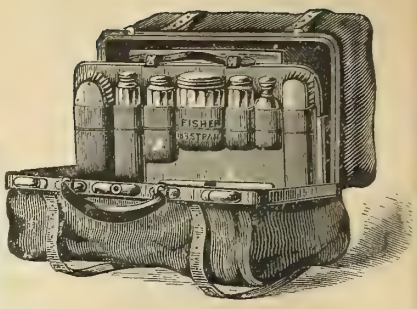

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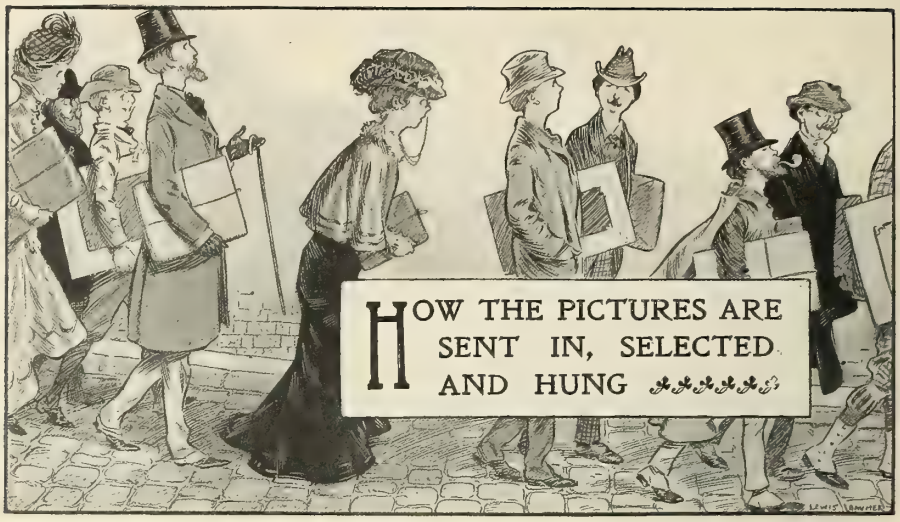

THE collection of pictures here placed before the reader is the sifting of a sifting twice repeated. The mass of the art produce of the year is, in the bulk, a fearsome thing. Of every kind and class, of every grade of excellence and the reverse, a flood of pictorial and plastic matter, it flows like the waters of a tidal wave towards Piccadilly as if threatening to engulf the Royal Academy in a great inundation of paint and plaster. For a few short days all is seeming confusion; and when the tide recedes but a fraction of the whole is left behind, like the little pools you see smiling upon the beach. The Selecting Committee has made its first rough choice. The Hanging Committee narrows it down still more, accurately adapting the amount of its final acceptance to the capacity of the Royal Academy picture walls and sculpture floor. Lastly, PICTURES OF THE YEAR steps in to the relief and protection of the visitor, to carry the principle of eclecticism further still and to exclude from view the many hundred canvases and statues of minor interest and minimum merit, that serve chiefly as a motley background to the representative works here included. This book, therefore, is a guide to the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1901 as it appears to the eye of the visitor.

But how has this result been achieved? How has the chaos of four weeks ago been reduced to this orderly display of representative British art? How has the great exhibition been managed? What, in short, is the process by which the Royal Academy sets before the public the harvest it has winnowed from the studios of the United Kingdom? These are questions that most patrons of Burlington House have asked themselves once and again as they enter the spacious, well-filled rooms. The curiosity is legitimate, for it is directed to proceedings of singular interest and significance; and to satisfy it we place before the reader the following sketch of a peep behind the curtain of the Royal Academy while the Members are busy setting their scenes and arranging the furniture of their stage.

* * * *

Show-Sunday has come and gone, and the outsider is alone in the studio with his pictures. He examines them critically once more. He asks himself whether they will look as well before the Selecting Committee, when he sends forth these children of his brush to expose them, like little naked St. Sebastians, to the shafts of their judges; he wonders how, if they pass the dread tribunal, they will be treated by the Hanging Committee, and how they will look beside their neighbours. The very Eminent Outsider is fairly easy in his mind; so, too, is the lady amateur, who has been known to send in sixteen frames (the double of the maximum) in order that "the

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President may choose the eight best." These persons are fairly at their ease, and experience nothing of the greatest pangs of the greatest number. They send in their pictures and patiently await their varnishing ticket, and in the meantime think as little as they can about the matter.

The busiest time of the whole Art-year of England is the fourth week in March. The last hasty touches are given, and within a few days sixteen thousand works of every sort and size (except, perhaps, the largest sculptures) will have been lodged within the walls of Burlington House; and within another four weeks about twelve thousand of them will have filtered through Gallery III back to their unhappy authors. The vast majority are delivered by carrier's cart. The works of the London artists are collected for the most part by well-known frame-makers, who make a speciality of the task, or else are handed in by experienced models. Those from the country are first consigned to London agents, who unpack and deliver them in accordance with the strict rules of the Academy.

It is a curious scene this day of delivery, not easily forgotten by the man who witnesses it.

"SENDING-IN" DAY.

Punctually as ten o'clock rings out on the morning air the north gate is thrown open, and along the brick-hedged passage that divides the University of London from Burlington Arcade flows the never-ending stream of Art, real and alleged. Carts, cabs, vans, pedestrians, pass slowly on beyond the entrance of the Academy schools. They stop just long enough at the next great doorway to deliver their freight to the

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dexterous porters, who quickly receive it and bear it in, and then they pass out into Piccadilly to hurry back to picture-land for more. Cunning fellows, these carmen and drivers, many of them. They know pretty well out of their experience, in a rough-and-ready sort of way, out of a general knowledge of their employers' previous successes, which of these works will remain till the end of the exhibition, and which of them they will be called upon to fetch away during the next three or four weeks, and deliver to the artists with an assumption of sympathy not at all appreciated by those whom it is meant to please.

In front, in the courtyard, pictures are taken as well, but small carts and hansoms are the rule there. The publicity of it, perhaps, makes the grand vestibule less patronised than the side entrance; yet the front hall becomes fuller and fuller as the day advances; the stacks increase in number and volume; and by midnight easy circulation becomes more and more difficult Little pictures predominate — water-colours and small oils for the most part. It is here that the lady delivers her little work to the porter and asks for a receipt. A receipt! It's as much as he and his fellows can do to take the things in and see that they have their owners' names upon them. Here, too, comes the cheerful gentleman up from the country for a month; he hands in his picture, and stoically calculates that he will just have time to collect it before the Academy opens and he is due back in Lincolnshire. Here, again, comes the lady, who, with the little water-colour in her hand, seeks to brush past the porter.

"You can't pass in, m'm."

"Oh, but I must. I want to take my picture in"

"Then give it to me, please."

"Give it to you? Nonsense! What for? Certainly not. I've painted it for a certain place, and I want to hang it there myself."

She is stopped again.

"The idea!" she exclaims, as she turns away with her picture; and the Academy, punished by the remorseless withdrawal, must count one enemy the more.

THE OLD SCHOOL AND THE NEW.

But the great sight is at the yawning doorway in the passage. It is a strange procession on sculpture-day: soldiers, wild beasts, statesmen, busts, recumbent figures, placid goddesses, solemnly filing down the narrow way in undignified security — lacking an arm, a tail, a head; for the dangers of transport are many, and it is safer not to fit on the missing limb till the judgment-seat is reached. But canvas or paper, bronze or plaster, all is impartially drawn into the insatiable eddy, swiftly and deftly. Up drives a cart laden with a dozen pictures; the men in charge unload it quickly, carry the canvases along the passage, and hand them over to the official keeping of the porters. If a picture be large and heavy a cry is raised for the trolly, a tiny conveyance standing six inches off the floor; and the whole thing is wheeled along to where the great hydraulic lift is at work. This huge machine is loaded as swiftly as expert hands can

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do it, with a curious absence of noise or fuss; but although the moving platform rises every ten minutes stacked with two or three score works, landing its freight in the Central Hall above, it cannot of course keep pace with the delivery. The pictures are ranged round below in scores, in fifties, in hundreds; and they spread like some curious geological strata along the walls of the cavernous passage—sometimes fifteen deep, and huge pictures, too, some of them—until they abut on the mouth of the entrance itself, and leave at last but an eighteen-inch rivulet of space between the banks of frames. Time goes on—and this is the last day! Four o'clock, five, six, eight. The stream of vehicles is becoming spasmodic, but the delivery never stops. All is quiet and orderly. The gas-lamp gives a sufficient glare. Six thousand — seven — nine — twelve. "More in now than this time last year," cries an official. He knows what he is talking about, this man, and he looks now and then up the little roadway at the occasional conveyances that still keep turning the corner at the top. As the hours roll on it is clear that the numbers will rival, if not exceed last year's total.

UP-TO-DATE.

Nine o'clock. All the time the great lift is working, silently, slowly; and upstairs not fewer than seven of the great Academy rooms are crammed full of works of art, and otherwise. The Selecting Committee have been sitting all day; they have begun their work early; but what impression can a day's judging make upon this vast mass of material? But they work away, they and their carpenters, and all seems calculated bustle and orderly confusion.

Half-past nine. The numbers have been passed, and it is a record. If a dozen pictures have gone in, fourteen thousand at least have been sent up for judgment - every one with its own special little parcel of hopes, and prayers, and fears. The wind blows keenly down the passage as the gas-flame flickers in the lamp. But the bare-armed porters stick to their work, and their foreheads shine with their efforts, and all around there is a litter of dust and straw and bits of gold frame-ornament, and here and there a label that has somehow been torn from the picture it described.

A quarter to ten, and there is a lull in the procession of the carts. Will many more come? The men themselves, tired as they are, seem to be roused to curiosity as the hour of closing draws near. But they know the ways of artists, and await the heavy vans which are likely to crowd in at the last. "Here's a big 'un!" cries a voice; and it is dealt with as expeditiously as the others. A few more, and then a move is made to the great door in Burlington Gardens, and as the first stroke of ten booms forth from the church tower hard by, the heavy gate is swung to, and whatever may be shut out must wait till another twelve months have sped round.

Above stairs the work has been proceeding. So admirable is the organisation that a staff of about twenty well-trained men suffices to deal with the enormous mass of material sent in, and in an incredibly short time the works are ready for inspection. Day by day and night by night the arrangement of them has been proceeding, for the loading, unloading, and marshalling take time; and the Central Hall, with the exception of the railed-off hole near the middle of the floor, is a solid mass of pictures ranged against the wall more or less according

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to size, and threaded only by narrow avenues, while they overflow into neighbouring rooms – a sight to strike terror into the souls of the incoming jury.

The Selecting Committee sets to work. It consists of ten members, with the President, *ex officio*, as chairman. He is forced by virtue of his office to be present year by year at this tedious, irritating, fatiguing, ungrateful, painful duty of judging; accepting, doubting, damning—chiefly doubting and damning. The rest of the Council "rotates," but the President knows no relief. He and the Secretary are fixtures, while the ordinary members "go off," five every year—each member serving two years in succession. The Associates are not eligible for this duty, but the latest-elected Member of the year is by the laws called upon to serve. The Court sits in the largest room, Gallery III, the members in a semi-circle, with the President in the middle, while the "carpenters" walk before them with an ever-changing, disjointed panorama three weeks long. These carpenters have been charged by the President on no account to reveal to the outside world any hint of what passes within, and they know how much their own interests depend upon their loyalty. They bring in the pictures one by one, standing about four yards off, resting the larger works on the floor and the smaller on a stool. A glance generally suffices to determine the verdict, and "No!" "Out!" is the constant cry. If a good or a promising picture comes along, the bearer is stopped and the work examined. If it is accepted outright, it is placed in a paradise apart with the chosen few – an infinitesimal fraction of the whole; if it is doubtful, it is marked with a "D" (Doubtful) – a sort of decree *nisi*, possibly to be made absolute later on; and if it is not worthy of such hesitation, the head carpenter, on a sign from the President, chalks it with a "cross" (×), and sends it forthwith to the Academic Hades – to the cellars.

FROM THE COUNTRY.

"It's left their sight almost as soon as in it—
They damn them at the rate of twelve a minute."

sings a modern Peter Pindar. But he is below the mark: the rate is higher—but then the character of many of the works is vastly lower than any reader might be willing to believe. As Lord Leighton himself told me, "they are often no better than the salmon on the pavement," and the majority are judged at a glance before the porter can stop. Yet the Council is notoriously indulgent, according to its lights, although insuperably hostile to certain forms of art for which some outsiders loudly demand recognition. It

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will spend some little while discussing a picture, will sometimes reverse a passed judgment which might seem harsh, and will reward a fine work with a round of applause. And all the while the wonderful Secretary sits at his table taking down the names of artists and pictures as they are rapidly called out, like a recording angel inscribing in his Book of Fate the verdict of the Immortals, for good or for evil, on the Blessed and the Damned.

When the oil-pictures are disposed of, the members close up a little, and the water-colours are dealt with in a similar way. Then come the black-and-whites, the architectural drawings, and the sculpture. In the latter case the Committee commonly visits the heavy statuary in a neighbouring room. The works of foreign artists are examined last of all, and when the short half-hour required for them is over, the duty of the Council, acting as the Selecting Committee, comes to an end. The members have been judging for many days from ten o'clock till six, with one hour's rest for luncheon and half an hour for tea, and have had but little relaxation in all that trying period. Incidents there sometimes are, and surprises. There is probably the usual insulting picture – directed against the members themselves; there is the blasphemous, the improper picture; there is the mad picture, and so forth; but these eccentricities make little sensation, as a rule. The *genus* of each is well known, and they scarcely awaken interest.

HANGING.

Many of those who have not been present at such a "selecting" have been ready to believe the judges unmindful of the wounds they inflict at each adverse verdict pronounced, and do not hesitate to bring charges of personal animus, selfish haste, and the like. No belief is less justifiable. As to the first suggestion, the presence of ten alert judges is sufficient security against any such breach of trust: to suppose the contrary would be to believe in the possibility of a unanimous conspiracy against individual fellow-artists. Having myself served on a similar Selecting Committee (for the British section of the Paris Exhibition) with a number of Academicians, I can bear witness to the extraordinary care patience, indulgence, and even solicitude, shown by one and all. Sympathy with the absent artist would often amount to

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generosity; a single champion of a picture would sometimes be allowed to carry his point against the majority, if he could show cause; and as time went on the disposition of the Committee tended more than ever towards kindness than severity, especially when the work of the younger men was concerned.

Who knows so well as they—they who are also the administrators of benevolent funds to the poor artist — who knows so well the pang of rejection? Most of them have themselves felt it before they struggled into fame; all of them can realise the greater pain of the unsuccessful: the sickening despair, the ruin, that so often accompany the rejected picture back to the studio. And, moreover, they remember that the picture's chances are not settled by their preliminary selection — there is still the Hanging Committee, whose duty it will be to turn out at least a couple of thousand of the works which they have allowed provisionally to remain. When in 1771 Dr. Johnson interposed for Mr. Lowe (whose merits did not deserve the intervention), and pleaded for "the revocation of this incapacitating edict" in order to "deliver an unhappy man from great affliction," a man who "considers disgrace and ruin as the inevitable consequence of your determination," he was pleading the case of whole generations of artists who have suffered, some undeservedly, from the adverse verdict of their judges. But the very men who most loudly denounce the Academy's lack of judgment are commonly those who show themselves the bitterest on any display of over-indulgence by the Council that may be shown on the Academy's walls. On this Council rests the responsibility of preparing ground for the exhibition; and the men who compose it may no more close their eyes to the faults of Mr. McGilp—although they know that Mrs. McGilp and the children are starving at home—than they may show unmerited severity to J. J., with his rising vogue and his balance at the bank.

A LITTLE GEM.

* * * *

Not to all who love her does Art toss the kerchief of her preference; not on every seeker after beauty has Nature set the seal of the elect; and those who have mistaken their ambition for their ability must accept in silence the inexorable doom, and bear the sacrifice they cannot escape.

You may approve the Royal Academy as the great official living Art institution of the day, or you may deride it for its dulness — you may regard it as the chief instrument of Art education, or (forgetting that it is the main business of an Academy to be academic) you may denounce it as an impediment to all advance, all novelty, all "modernity"; but you cannot deny that it is at the centre of all the popular artistic movement of the country, and that the relatively few who repudiate its pretensions, and the fewer still who have advertised in

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the public prints that they "have had the honour of rejection at the hands of the Royal Academy," accept the statement that the artistic stellar system of England revolves round the pole-star of Burlington House. Effective opposition to the Royal Academy is impossible - criticism is well-nigh impotent: the great institution proceeds irresistibly on its way like an ironclad through the water, driven by the momentum imparted by its "Instrument," while even those who man the ship can do not much to steer it. But that that little is done with consummate ability will generally be allowed. Royal Commission, Parliamentary Inquiry, Ministerial appeal — all have failed to modify the course of the Academy in any essential which its Council has disapproved. The General Assembly is the shaper of its own destinies—it is responsible to its Sovereign alone—it elects whom it pleases, teaches how it pleases, exhibits what it pleases, and awards its benefactions where it pleases. Be it a Juggernaut, a Monopoly, a Tyranny of Forty, or an institution of civilisation and beneficence, it is a law unto itself and others. Its enemies characterise it as a "Trust," its friends as a "Trustee." And amid all criticism, all attack, all opposition, it advances through the years with little diminution of public esteem, and with curiously little change in either its temperament or its policy.

It is this corporation - regarded here as an exhibiting society merely - which fills the mind of nearly every practising artist in the country as the springtime comes round. Last year's successes are to be repeated, last year's failures to be avenged. Great hopes are built on Academic discernment, some little faith is revived in the Academic conscience (if any)—for not many rejected painters or sculptors are disposed to believe that last year's misfortunes were really deserved. Once more the votaries are upon their knees about the idol, ready to drive nails into the figure if their prayers be not answered. Yet it is not only those who have faith in this god of art who are among the worshippers: many who most loudly denounce deficiencies, injustice, blindness, stupidity, and the like, fling themselves prostrate, as they know no other means by which they may attain their ends. Individuals may abstain, as individuals; but not as a class. Even the clever *gamins* of the art-world, who turn cart-wheels beside the coach of Art and fancy that it is art itself which is performing the revolution—even they "send in" year by year, and comfort themselves with the thought that the rejection of them is but a compliment to their individuality. Poor aching souls! they smile and smile, but there is little sincerity in their merriment.

A YOUNG MAN WHO HAS STUDIED IN PARIS.

Into this great vortex, then, is sucked nearly all the chief art effort of the year, in a volume that increases annually.

When the Academy took up its palatial quarters in its own Burlington House, and proclaimed once for all its total independence of the Government by dismissing the accustomed sentries, the artists besieged it as they had not besieged it before. The numbers were quadrupled by the time the 'eighties were reached. In 1884 there were 8,093 works sent in, of which 761 were accepted, 2,116 marked "Doubtful," and

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5,216 were rejected. In 1887, no fewer than 8,515 *pictures* (besides other works) were delivered at Burlington House; and in 1888, 9,385 works were sent in, 602 were accepted, 2,900 were "doubtful," 5,825 were rejected on their demerits, and 58 were inadmissible. As to this same year, 1888, the following classification of the works *exhibited*, as contributed proportionately by members and outsiders, will, I believe, be of general interest:—

	Paintings.	Water-Colours.	Sculpture.	Architecture	Miniatures and Enamels	Crayon Drawings	Engravings.	Etchings.
Outsiders	1,023	307	144	185	100	45	39	37
Members	140	4	22	7	0	0	2	2

It can hardly be maintained, after this, that the members monopolise the space.

Returning to the number of works sent in, and to the rapid progression year by year, we have the following startling figures:—

1770	1860	1884.	1888.	1889	1890.	1900.
234	2,612	8,093	9,385	10,986	11,659	**13,666**

That is to say, in 1900, 13,462 works were sent in by a few over 5,000 outsiders, while the body of Academicians contributed 204. What are the conclusions to be deduced from these figures, what the dangers to which they are likely to lead, what the remedies to be applied—these points need not be dwelt on here. Such are some of the details of the "Sending-in." The situation disclosed is full of interest, eloquently suggestive to all who are concerned for the material progress of our national art.

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"HELENA AND HERMIA."

"We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needls created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key."

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Thomas Sidney Cooper, R.A. Born Sept. 26th, 1803.

"On a Sunny Summer Day in the Meadows."—T. SIDNEY COOPER, R.A.

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"The clouds that gather round the setting sun."—SEYMOUR LUCAS, R.A.

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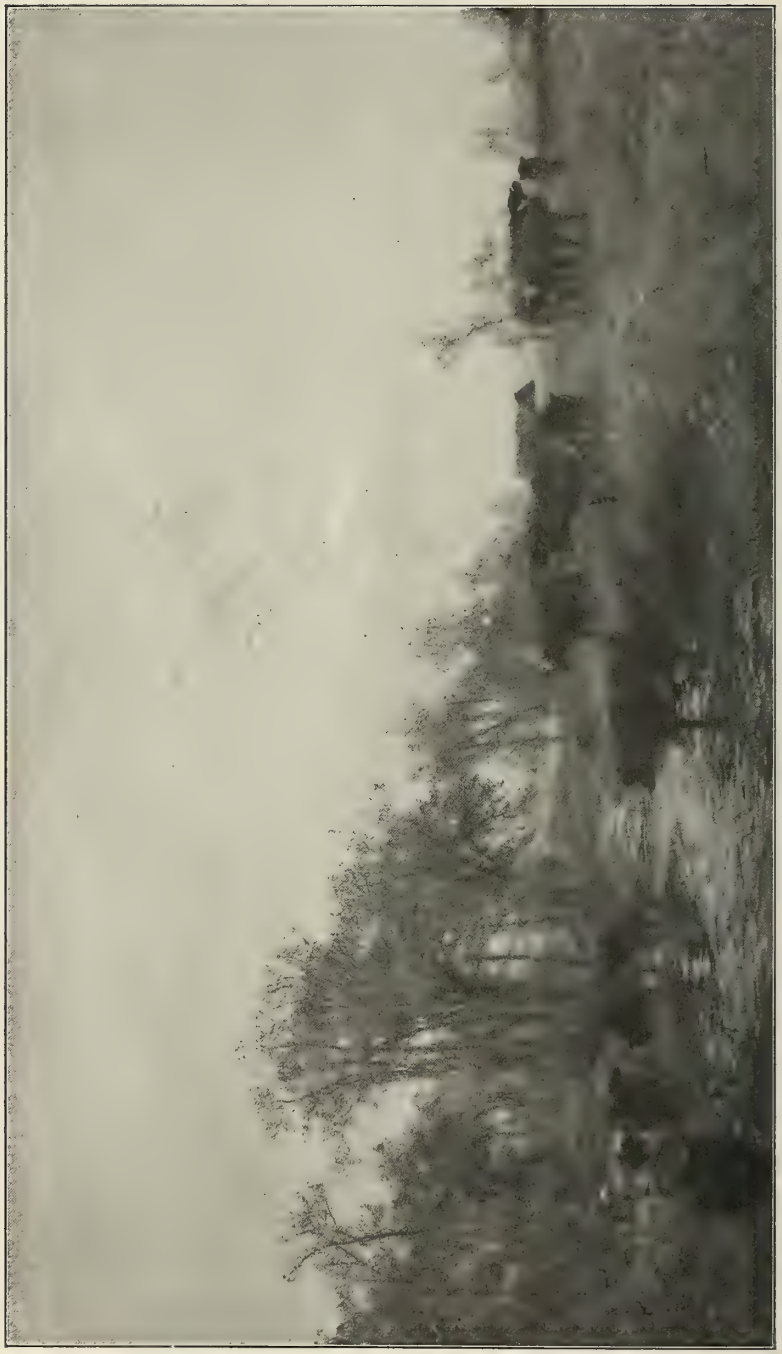

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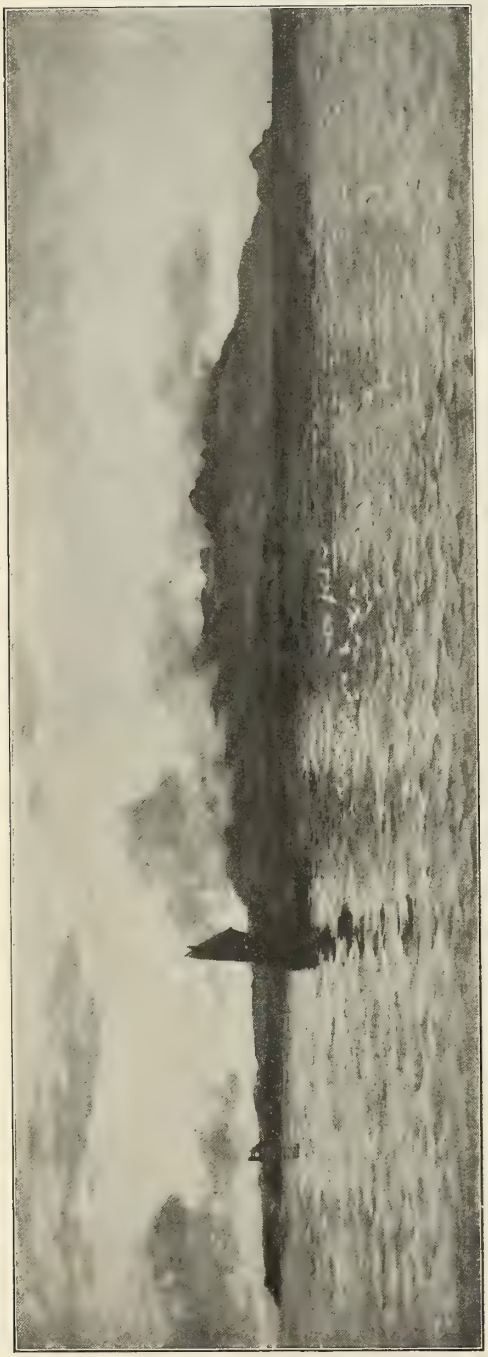

Herring Fishing off Kildonan Castle, Isle of Arran.—COLIN HUNTER, A.R.A.
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"The 22nd of January, 1901."—STANHOPE FORBES, A.R.A.

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"In Dreamland."—GEORGE H. BOUGHTON, R.A.

"A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky."
—*Castle of Indolence.*

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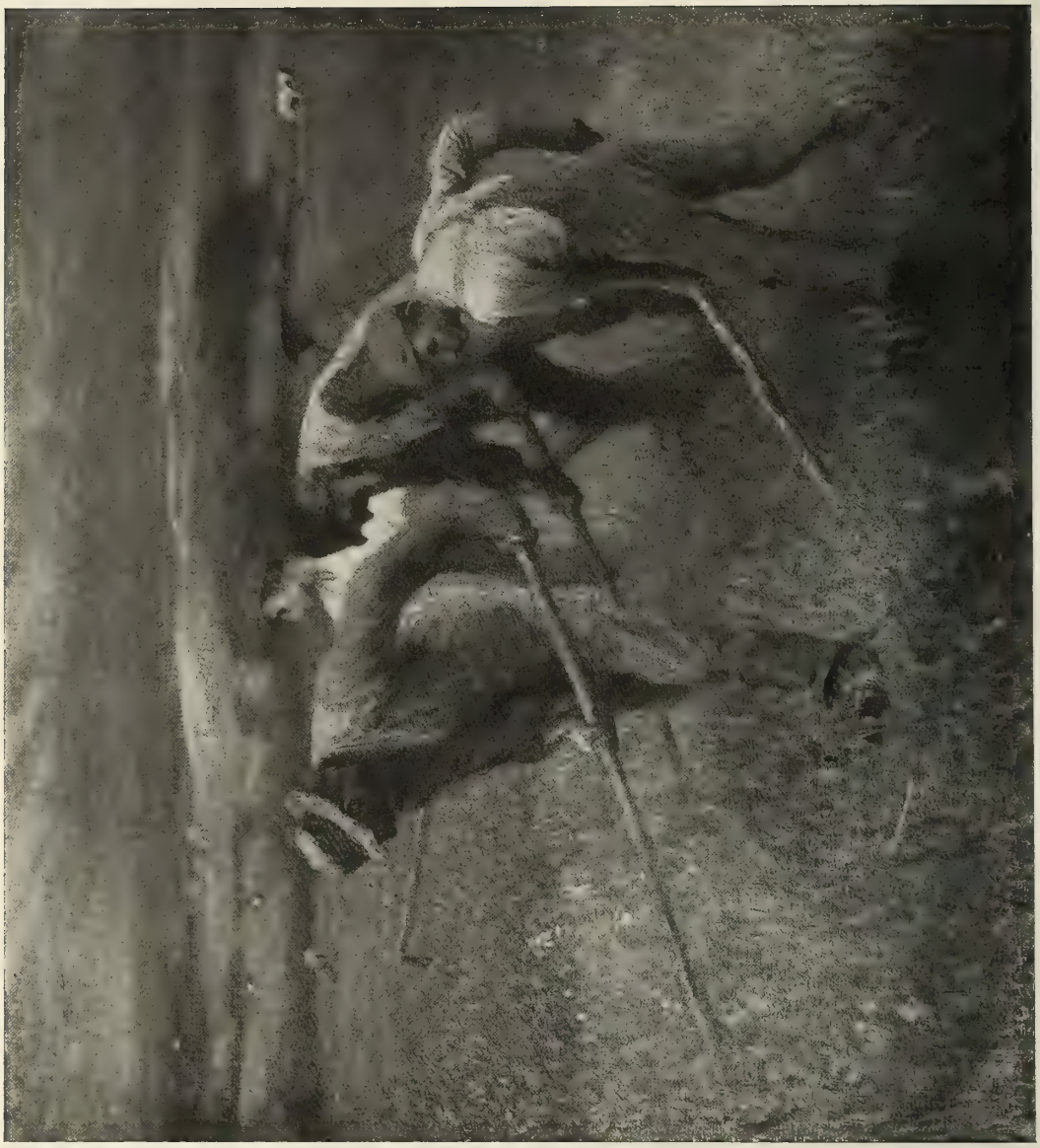

Sons of the Soil.—G. Clausen, A.R.A.

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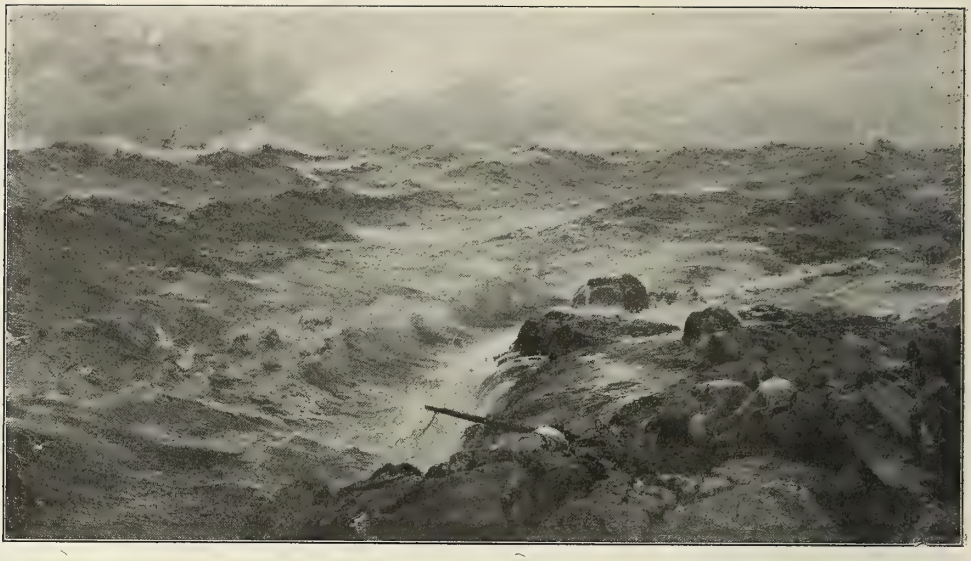

Birds of Prey.—C. Napier Hemy, A.R.A.

Young April.—G. H. Boughton, R.A.

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A zither evening with my students in my studio.—H. VON HERKOMER, R.A. *(Painted at night.)*
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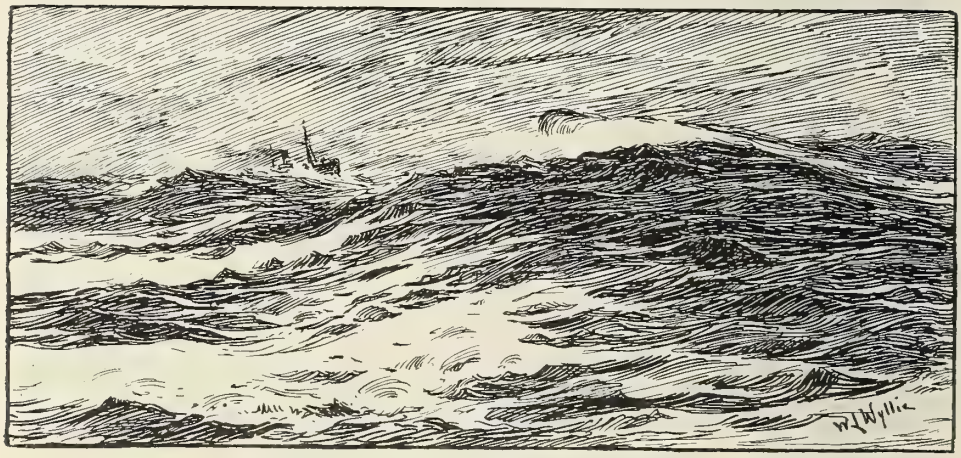
Land of Wine and Song.—MARK FISHER.



"Just a funnel and a mast lurching through the spray,
So we threshed the *Bolivar* out across the Bay."
—W. L. WYLLIE, A.R.A. *(Original sketch.)*

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In a fairy woodland.—E. Parton.

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The Capture: "Where land and water kiss."—H. J. Draper.
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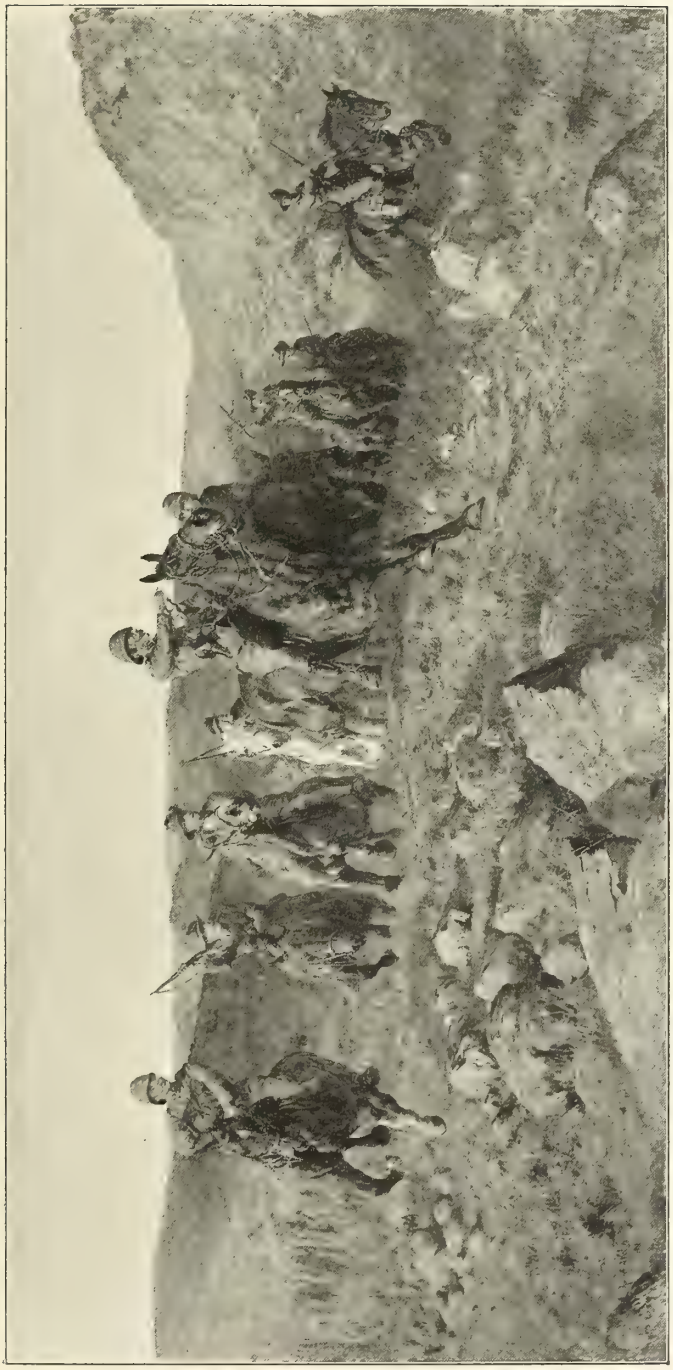

"In sight": Lord Dundonald's dash on Ladysmith.—L. Kemp-Welch.

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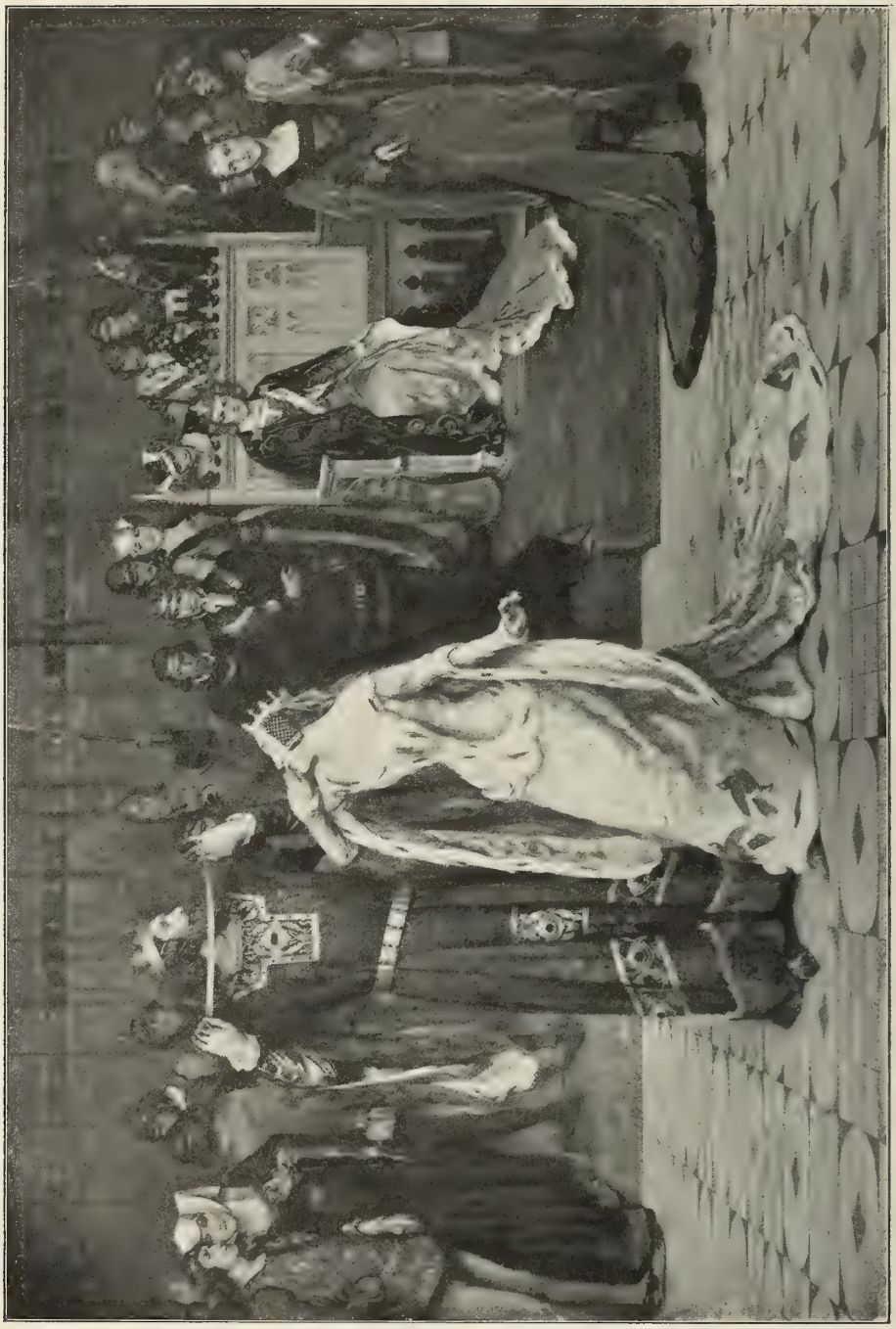

"Honi soit qui mal y pense"—The origin of the Order of the Garter, King Edward III., 1349.—A. Chevallier Tayler.

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Streatley, from Goring.—E. PARTON.

"Sunday morning."—EDWARD STOTT.
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"Four corners to my bed,
Four angels round my head,
Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on."

—I. L. Gloag.

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The River Bank.—EDWARD STOTT.
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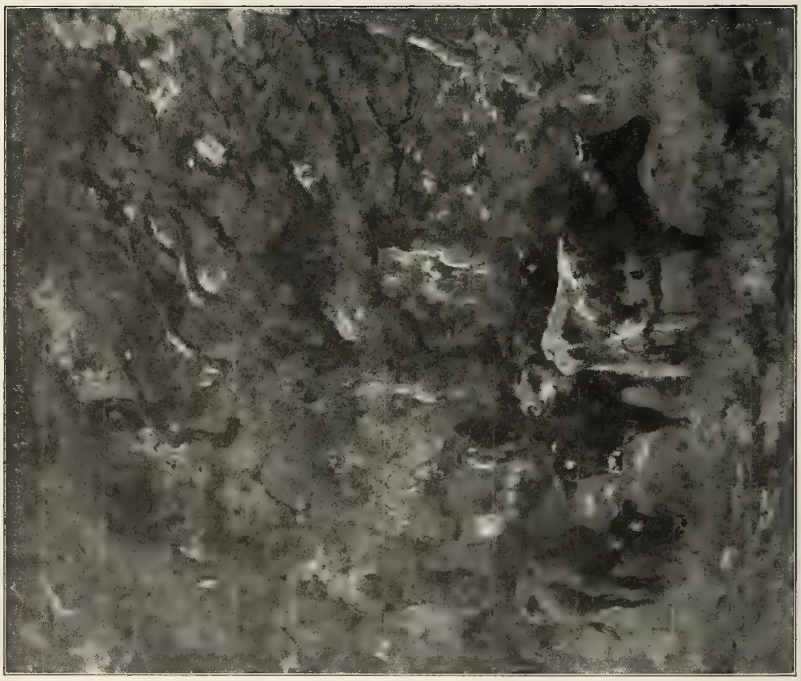
Rising Moon.—Edith Corbet.



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"Babes in the Wood."—W. R. Symonds.

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"To the sound of the guns": arrival of the 62nd Field Battery at the Modder River battle, after a terrible forced march.
—J. P. Beadle.

Home again.—G. Sheridan Knowles.
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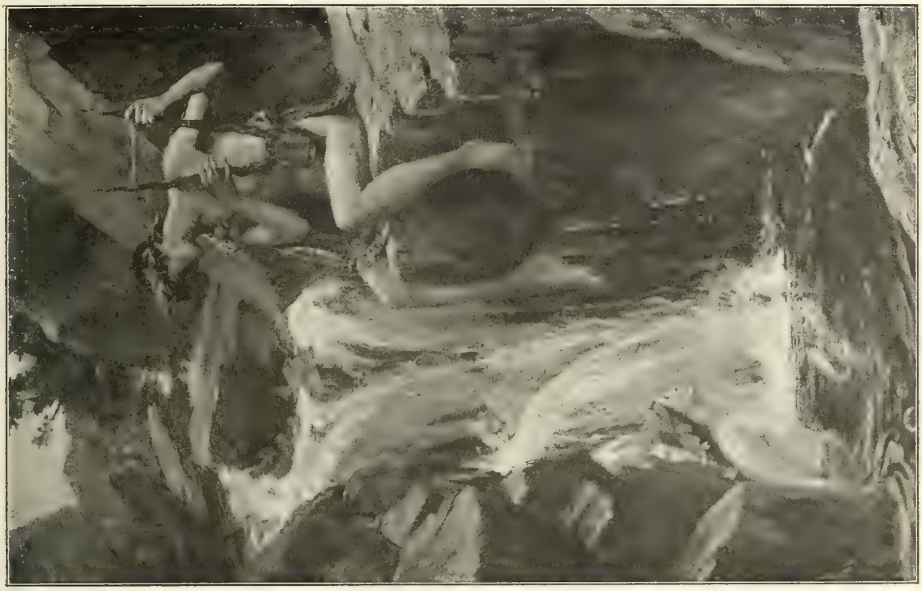

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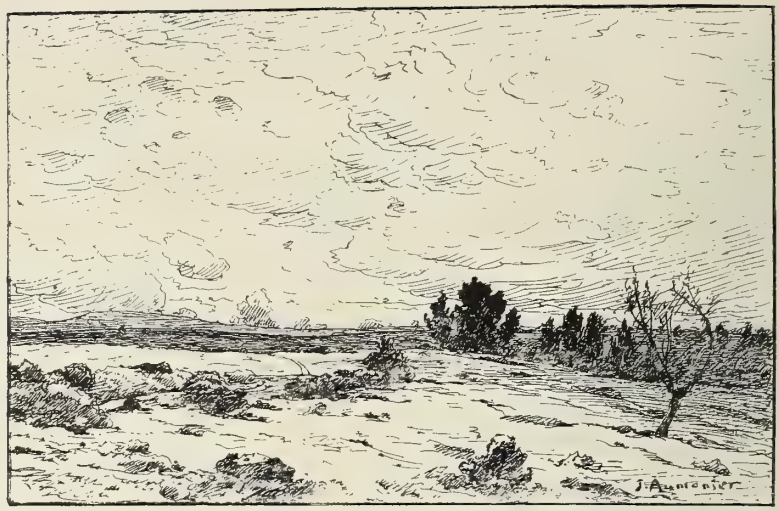

A lonely heath.—J. AUMONIER. *(Original Sketch.)*

Ardlui, Loch Lomond.—D. FARQUHARSON.

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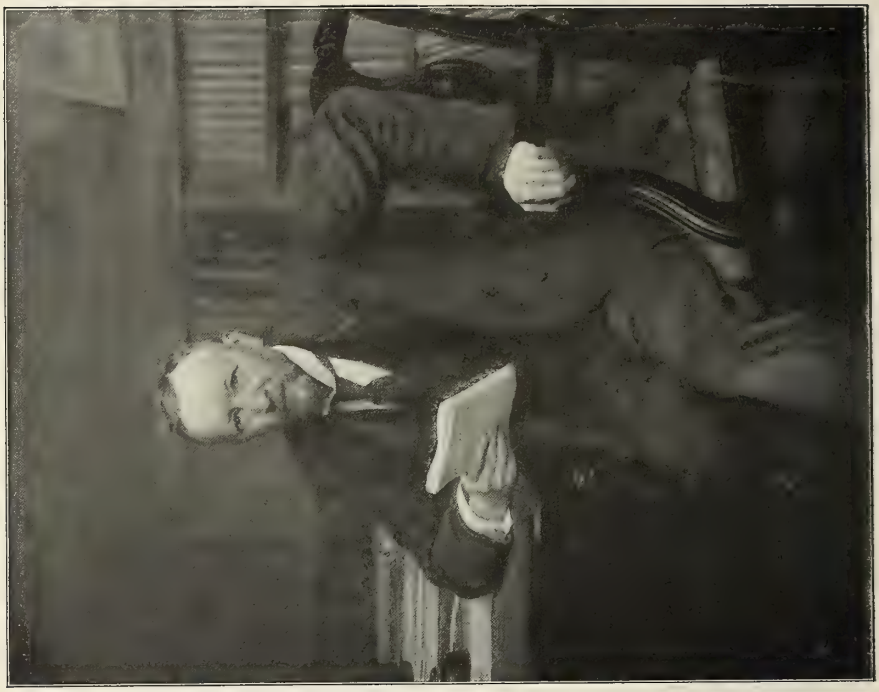

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Mrs. Graeme Sinclair.—T. Blake Wirgman.

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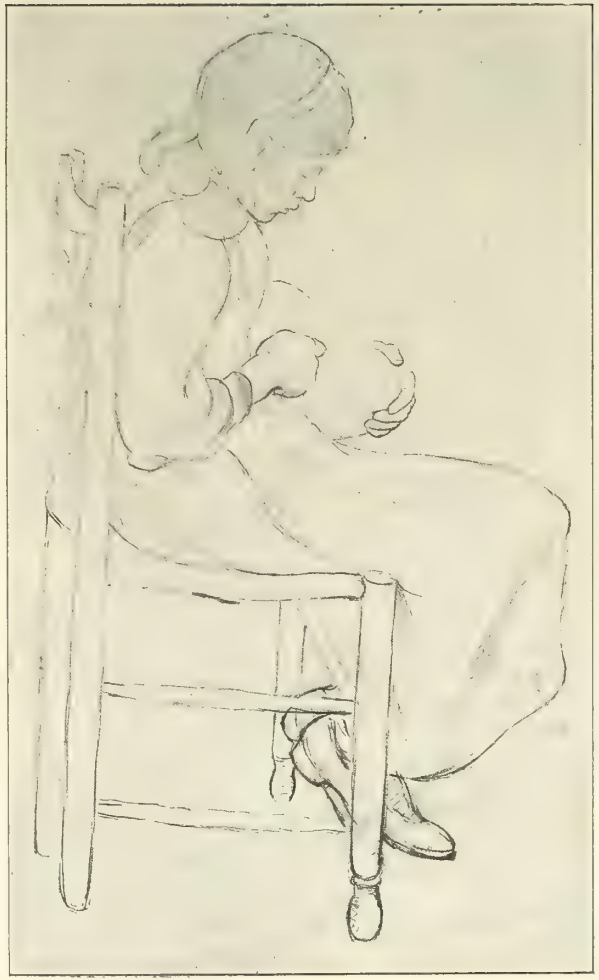

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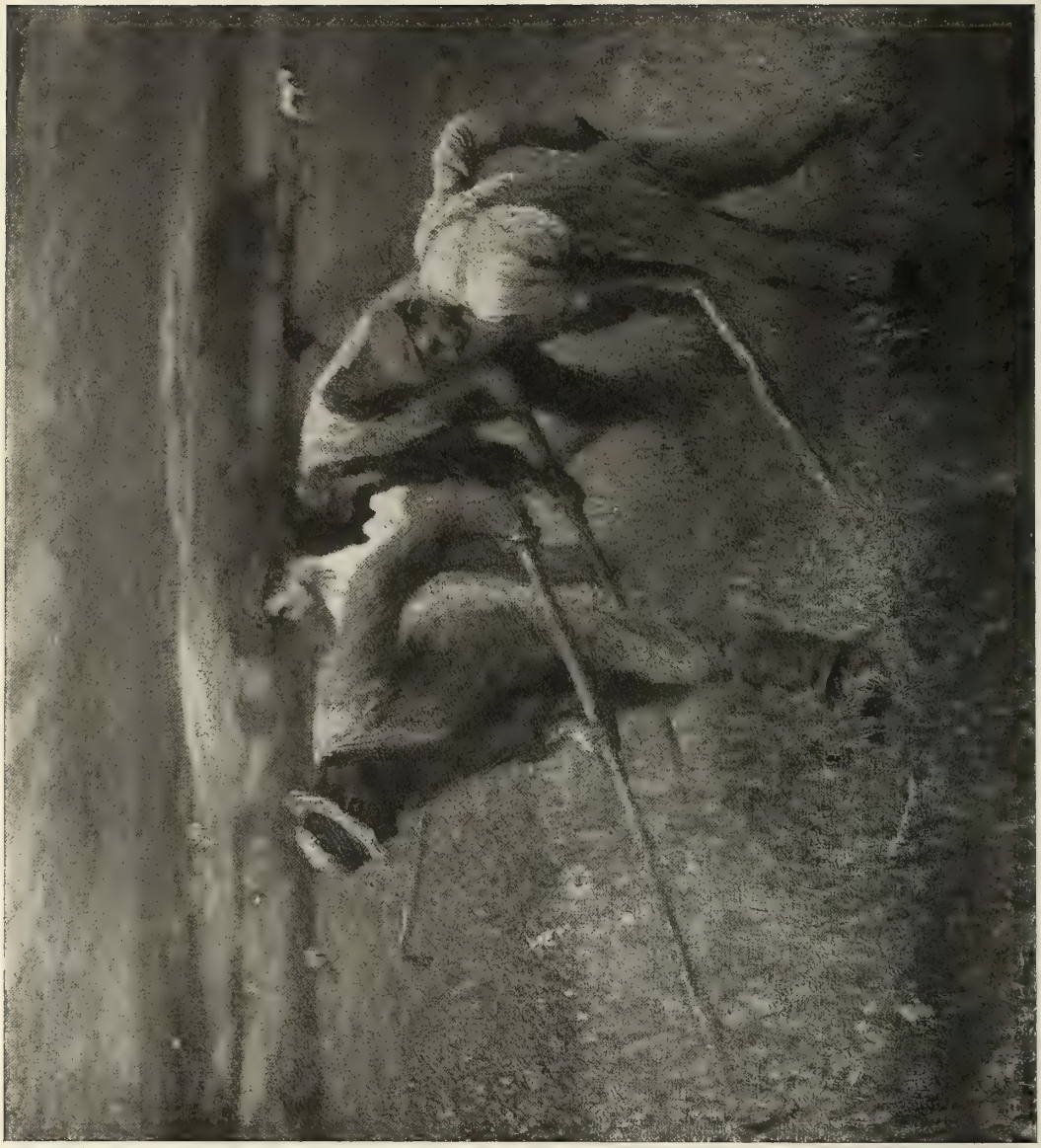

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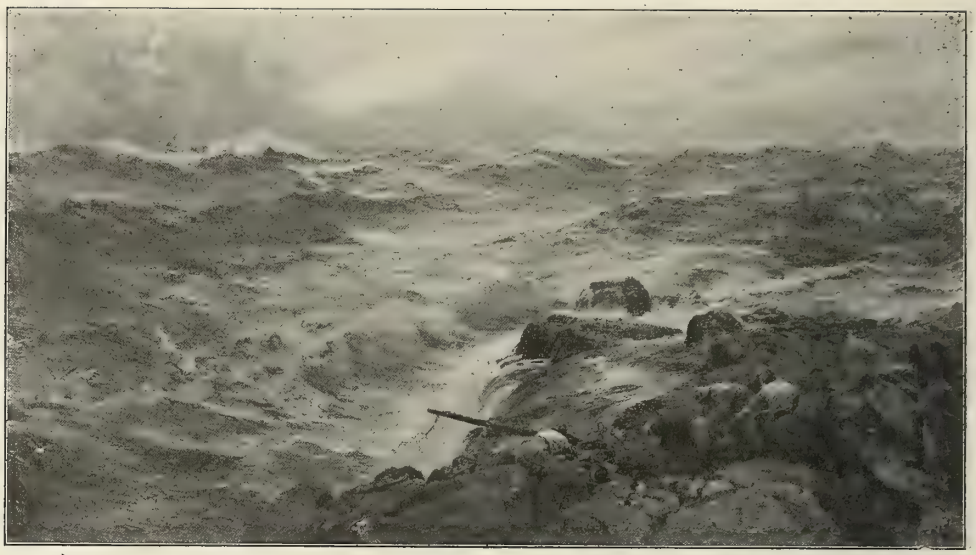

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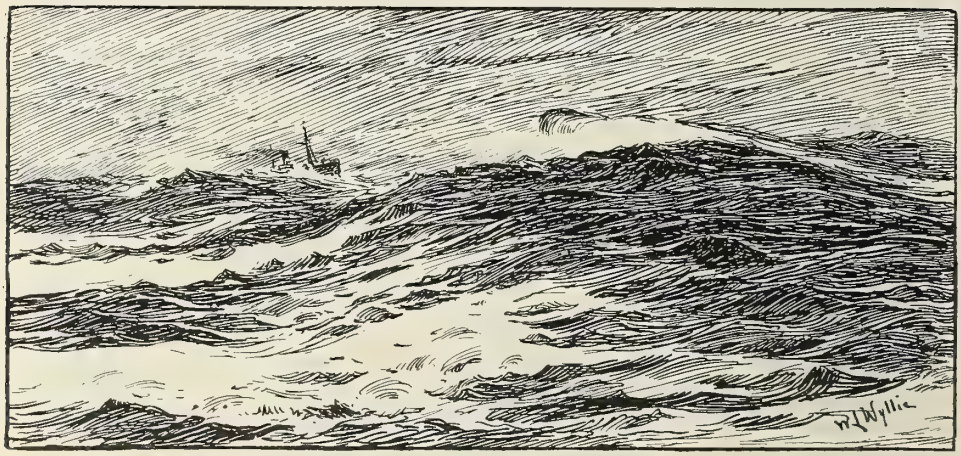

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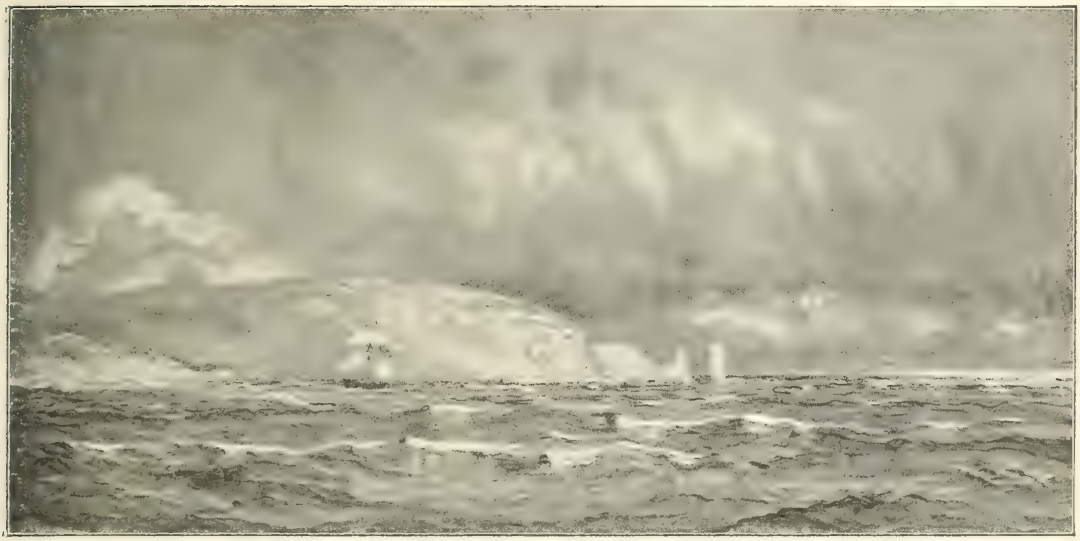

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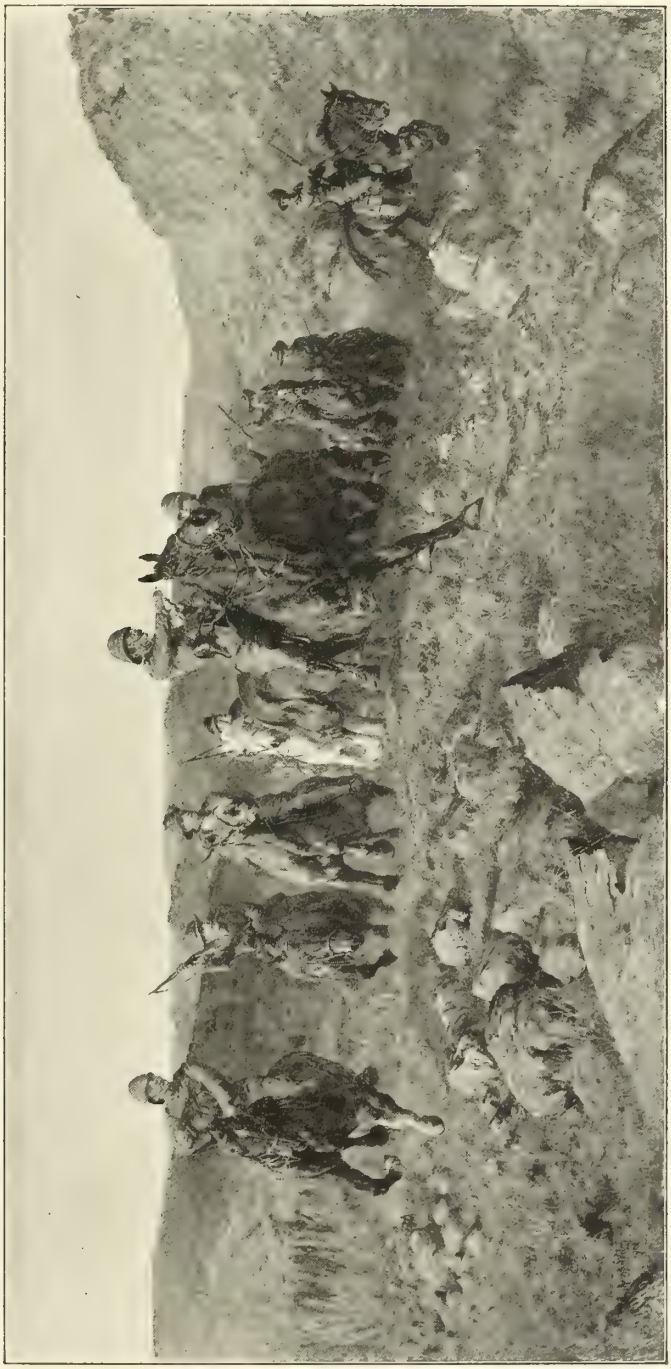

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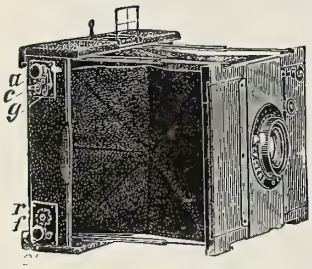

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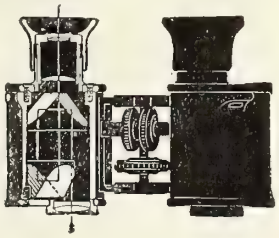

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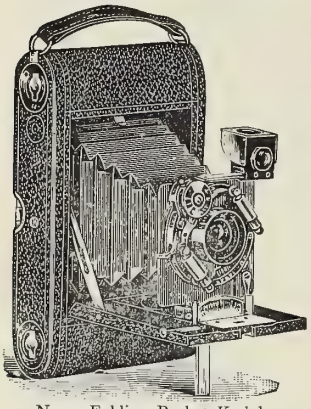

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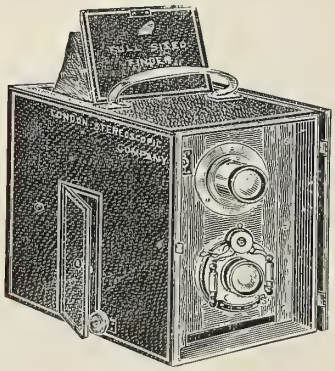

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Influenza—most effectual.

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N.B.—It is scarcely necessary to remark that, whilst scrupulously respecting the wishes of the Medical Profession, in withholding the names and addresses of our correspondents, we guarantee the bonâ fide character of every communication of which we may now, or at any other time, make use. The original letters are always open to the inspection of any Member of the Profession, and this fact will sufficiently attest their genuineness.

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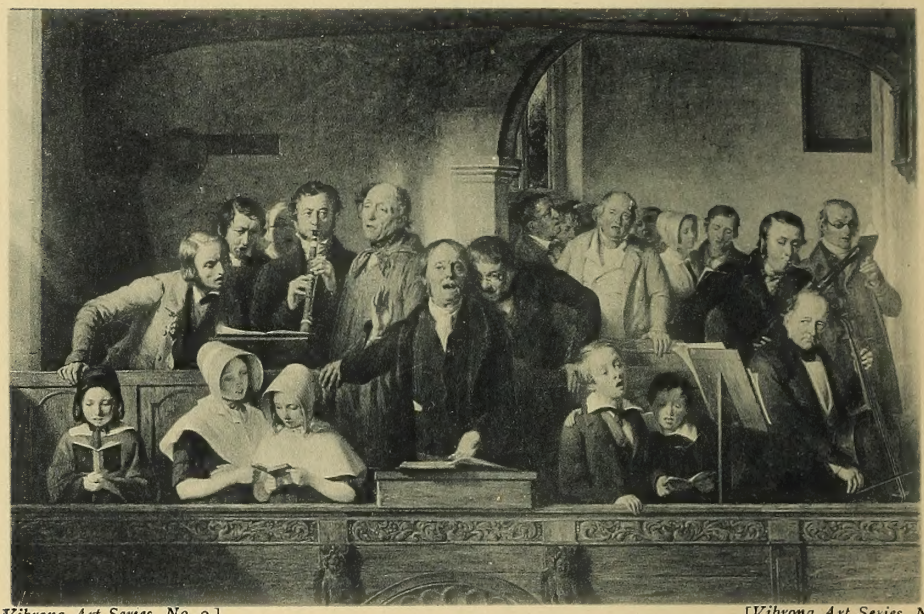

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FUNDS. Date.	Amount.	Date.	Amount.	NEW BUSINESS. Period.	Sum Assured.
31 March, 1875 ...	£2,864	31 December, 1895 ...	1,923,835	13 years ended 31 March, 1887	£10,421,671
31 March, 1885 ...	471,353	31 December, 1899 ...	2,385,266	12¾ " " 31 December, 1899	15,053,087

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